Pikes Peak Gay & Lesbian Film Festival

GO!

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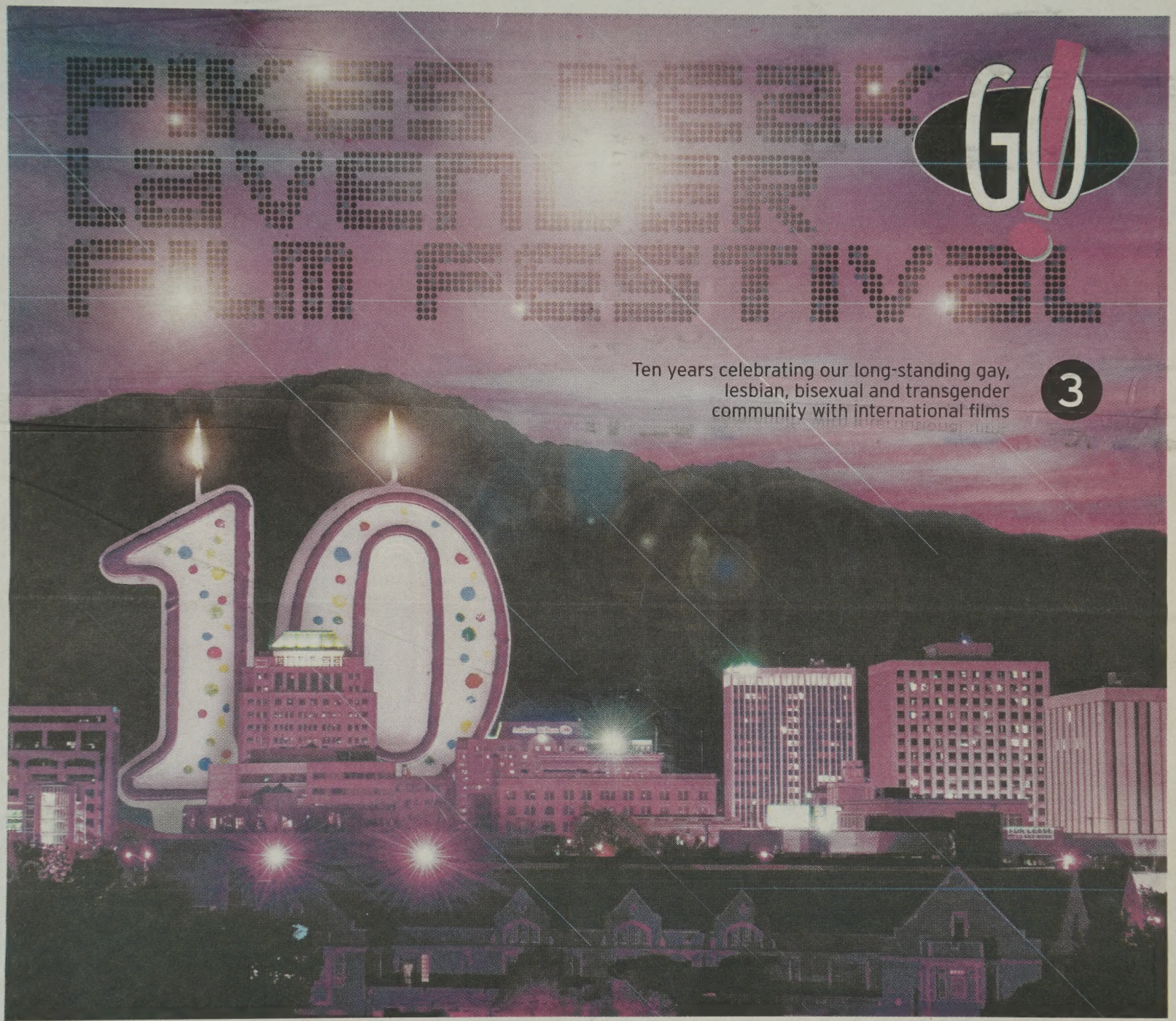
3



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Estela's Mexican Restaurant on Eighth Street reopens, serving food made in the grand tradition of Pueblo – think red and green chili.
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GO STAFF

Warren Epstein
Entertainment Editor • 636-0270 • warren.epstein@gazette.com

Jennifer Mulson
Listings Editor/Reporter • 636-0277 • jen.mulson@gazette.com

Linda Navarro
Reporter/Copy Editor • 636-0374 • linda.navarro@gazette.com

Teresa Farney
Restaurant Columnist • 636-0271 • teresa.farney@gazette.com

Nathaniel Glen
Restaurant Critic • nathaniel.glen@gazette.com

Brandon Fibbs
Film Critic • brandon.fibbs@gazette.com

Todd Wallinger
Theater Critic • todd.wallinger@gazette.com

Tracy Mobley-Martinez
Arts Reporter • tracy.mobleymartinez@gazette.com

CONTACT US

Calendar Listings

Calendar listings are published on a space-available basis. Information is due by noon Friday for the next week's publication.

Blogs

Film: gazettefilmblog.freedomblogging.com
Dining: gazettedining.freedomblogging.com
TV: springstvtalk.blogspot.com
Arts: csartsblog.freedomblogging.com

To submit a listing

Go to gazette.com and find the On the GO! section. Click on the Add an Event button and follow the instructions. Send photos related to your event to be considered for print as a jpg attachment via e-mail to warren.epstein@gazette.com

To advertise

If you want to advertise in GO! please call 636-0306 for details.

COVER DESIGN

Anita Renee Langemach
The Gazette illustration

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All Pointes West Ballet	SATURDAY, 7:30 PM	PPC
CS Philharmonic: La Boheme	Sept. 26, 8 PM, Sept. 27, 2:30 PM	PPC
Lyle Lovett & John Hiatt	October 7, 7:30 PM	PPC
Rodney Carrington	October 9, 7:00 PM	PPC
Trans-Siberian Orchestra	November 4, 3:30 & 8 PM	World Arena
So You Think You Can Dance	November 5, 7:30 PM	World Arena
CS Sports Hall of Fame Dinner	November 10, 6:00 PM	World Arena
Brule	December 19, 7:30 PM	PPC
Qwest Tour: USA v. Finland women's hockey	Feb. 4, 7:00 PM	World Arena

Tickets are available at all front range King Soopers, the Citadel mall guest services desk, and the World Arena and Pikes P Center box offices. Charge by phone 520-SHOW or 866-464-2626 and online at www.ticketswest.com. Surcharges may apply. For information, visit www.pikespeakcenter.com and www.worldarena.com.

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A DIFFERENT PICTURE

Festival celebrates abiding community

BY FRANCES GOMEZTAGLE
Special to The Gazette

Alma Cremonesi knew there was more to Colorado Springs than our reputation as home to influential evangelical groups.

She knew that it was also home to a large gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community, and that its history of progressive politics reaches way back.

"What a lot of people don't know is that the first two churches in Colorado Springs were liberal. The Congregational Church was built first, but the Unitarian had the longest-running community."

"All of a sudden," Cremonesi said, "in the late '80s Colorado Springs became very divided and tense, homophobic and full of hate. It was giving the city bad credit."

Cremonesi said she started The Pikes Peak Lavender Film Festival 10 years ago to help change perceptions about Colorado Springs wrought by the strong anti-gay-rights movement here.

Film festival board member Kristin Lynch said that when she went to the festival in 2007 it was the first time she realized how large the gay community was here.

"It just blew my world," she said. "There were 500 people on opening night, gay and straight alike. Colorado Springs is not just what the new headlines or James Dobson or New Life is saying. There's a very strong, older, close-knit community that thinks like this. I know there are young people who think like this. We really have critical mass."

Lynch said the film festival is one reason people are drawn to the city.

"In addition to all the natural assets: being at the base of Pikes Peak, being able to snowboard or go on a bike ride in January, when you have a national festival like this, it adds to our reputation and our appeal to other people."

This year, board members hope to broaden their scope of community support, showing Colorado premieres of two movies dealing with individuals who are transgender: "Against a Trans Narrative" and "Diagnosing Difference."

SEE LAVENDER • PAGE 4

COURTESY LAVENDER FILM FESTIVAL

In "Make the Yuletide Gay," gay-and-proud college student Olaf (Keith Jordan), right, is back in the closet at his parents' home. His boyfriend (Adamo Ruggiero) shows up.

"Against a Trans Narrative" combines documentary technique, dramatic re-enactment, spoken word performance and commentary about transgendered people.

details

10TH ANNUAL LAVENDER FILM FESTIVAL

When: Today through Sunday
Where: Armstrong Hall, 14 E. Cache La Poudre St., and Cornerstone Arts Center, 825 N. Cascade Ave., Colorado College
Tickets: $10 individual film ticket/$75 full pass; pplff.org/index.php or 386-6843.

FILM FEST SCHEDULE

TODAY
Armstrong Hall
- **6 p.m.** – reception
- **7:30 p.m.** – Double feature, "I Can't Think Straight" (UK, 2007, 1 hour, 12 minutes); "Patrik, Age 1.5" (Sweden, 2008, 1 hour, 40 minutes)

SATURDAY
Cornerstone Arts Center
- **10 a.m.** – Double feature, "Against a Trans Narrative" (USA, 2009, 1 hour, 1 minute); "Diagnosing Difference" (USA, 2009, 1 hour)
- **Noon** – "Lucha" (USA, 2008, 15 minutes); "Ghosted" (Germany, Taiwan, 2009, 1 hour, 17 minutes)
- **2:30 p.m.** – "Welcome to my Queer Bookstore" (Taiwan, 2009, 19 minutes); "Make the Yuletide Gay" (USA, 2009, 1 hour, 29 minutes)

Armstrong Hall
- **5:30 p.m.** – "U-Haul Rap" (USA, 2008, 6 minutes); "Drool" (USA, 2009, 1 hour, 26 minutes)
- **7:45 p.m.** – "Frequent Traveller" (Portugal, 2007, 8 minutes); "Hollywood je t'aime," (USA, 2008, 1 hour, 35 minutes)

After-party: Underground, 110 N. Nevada Ave.

SUNDAY
Cornerstone Arts Center
- **11 a.m.** – Luncheon with festival producers and special guests at the Fine Arts Center
- **12:30 p.m.** – "Uncle Denis?" (UK, 2009, 18 minutes); "An Englishman in New York," (USA, 2009, 1 hour, 14 minutes)
- **2:30 p.m.** – Double feature, "Training Rules" (USA, 2009, 57 minutes); "Edie and Thea, A Very Long Engagement" (USA, 2009, 1 hour, 17 minutes)

Armstrong Hall
- **5:30 p.m.** – "Reunion," (USA, 2008, 11 minutes); "Dare" (USA, 2008, 1 hour, 30 minutes)
- **7:45 p.m.** – "Don't Mess With Texas," (USA, 2008, 7 minutes); "Hannah Free," (USA, 2009, 1 hour, 30 minutes)

LAVENDER: 1 goal is to educate about sexuality

FROM PAGE 3

"They're like the stepchild of the GLBT community," said board member Bob Armintor. "They're probably more 'closeted' in their public life. We want them to know there's a community here for them."

Members of the board looked forward to showing films to people who identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender, who often don't see themselves represented in mainstream cinema. They also like introducing heterosexuals to the films about that community.

Lynch said watching films at the festival educates people about sexuality.

"Society loves to compartmentalize and loves to label," Lynch said. "Sexuality is a spectrum. Hopefully, the film festival helps all of us understand just a little bit what it's like being viewed as abnormal, even when it's normal to you."

Board member Jerry Morris sees those insights in the film "Patrick, Age 1.5," which is about a gay couple seeking to adopt a baby. Instead, they get a homophobic adolescent.

Cremonesi, who's profiled in the book "Feminists Who Changed America," sees a relationship between feminism and gay rights.

"I've had gay activists thank me for being a pioneer feminist because feminism paved the way for them to seek their rights," she said. "It's about equality, which women were seeking."

"It gives people pause," Lynch said. "If you're heterosexual and in the majority, you go through life not recognizing how this other half might exist."

NATHAN A. SMITH

"Training Rules" is a documentary about Penn State women's basketball coach Rene Portland, who, along with Penn State, was sued for discrimination against lesbians by sophomore Jennifer Harris in 2006.

NOTABLE FILMS AT FESTIVAL

This year's lineup spans a wide range of subjects and approaches. Here are reviews of some of the films:

"I Can't Think Straight" – B
A love story between a Palestinian Christian woman and an Indian Muslim woman that touches on religion, culture and struggles in the Middle East along the way to happily ever after. This British film packs in more themes than its romantic comedy framework can really support. There's too much going on for the elements to come together, although an attractive cast and insights into unfamiliar cultures keep your attention.

"Patrik, Age 1.5" – A
Once you know the premise of this Swedish romance – a married gay couple think they are adopting a 1.5-year-old and end up instead with a surly 15-year-old – you'll be able to see every inch of the plot a mile ahead. But there's more than enough fun and heart to carry this well-made film, and the strong cast effectively sells the familiar trappings.

"Against a Trans Narrative," C, and **"Diagnosing Differences," B** – These documentaries cover much of the same territory – they even share one subject – but take opposite approaches. "Against a Trans Narrative" mixes re-enactments of common events in a transgendered person's evolution with commentaries and spoken-word performances. The mish-mash of styles often obscure the film's message, but there are powerful personal stories in the mix. "Diagnosing Differences" uses a more conventional documentary technique to look at how the medical community treats transgendered people. It makes a strong argument for a more humane, less dogmatic approach, but doesn't really articulate what that might look like.

Gustaf Skarsgård as Göran, from left, Torkel Petersson as Sven and Thomas Ljungman as Patrik in a scene from "Patrik, Age 1.5."

"Ghosted" – C
Shot in Taiwan and Germany, this supernatural love story wants to be a spooky thriller but falls flat as its plots and subplots never come together to deliver a big payoff. There's not enough dramatic tension to set the mood, and the love stories get slighted by the story's time-shifting structure.

"Make the Yuletide Gay" – B
Family Christmases gone awry are a Hollywood staple. This brash gay version garners a fair number of laughs as it traipses through the holiday, but it lacks the manic energy of a "Christmas Vacation"-style farce. And, despite plentiful sexual innuendo and blunt talk, it's too nice and too lightweight to be memorably funny.

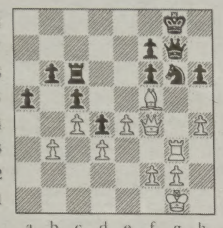
"Drool" – C
With voice-overs from a disaffected teenage girl, a la "Juno," and a plot that borrows from "Thelma and Louise," this dark comedy isn't afraid to go for the jugular, making jokes out of spousal abuse and revenge. Despite strong performances, it's a little scattered and can be tone-deaf as it navigates the tricky course of turning tragedy into comedy.

"Edie and Thea: A Very Long Engagement" – A
Told in Edie's and Thea's own words and using their photos and films, this documentary explores a 42-year love story with heart and detail. Edie and Thea's love and commitment, even as Thea is confined to a wheelchair because of multiple sclerosis, is heart-warming, as is the rest of the couple's long history.

ANDREW WINEKE, THE GAZETTE

Brainiac Alert!

CHESS QUIZ



WHITE TO PLAY

Hint: Use the pin on the g-file.

Solution to the above puzzle is on page 50.

Colorado Springs Independent
the smart alternative

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Film

Speak of the devil

Jennifer's Body (R)

Chapel Hills 15, Cinemark 16, Hollywood Interquest, Tinseltown

By MaryAnn Johanson

Now I get what so many were complaining about last year with *Juno*, how screenwriter Diablo Cody's dialogue was distractingly self-conscious and desperate to sound hip. It didn't bother me with that film because the characters felt real — the way they talked heightened the reality and underscored the awkwardness of being a pregnant high schooler.

Theoretically, the same could be said about the awkwardness of being a high school girl possessed by a demon: that it could use a thematic assist from lines such as, "You need a mani, bad. You should find a Chinese chick to buff your situation." But when it gets around to having a sweet high school boy describe his girlfriend *to* his girlfriend as "this girl I made love to for four minutes last night," well, something smells bad.

It's as if everyone in *Jennifer's Body* knows that they're a character in the new movie written by Cody, and so those characters had damn well better say something clever every few minutes.

Is Megan Fox playing the sexy cheerleader here, or is Satan preparing to devour this unsuspecting boy whole?

The possession of Jennifer (Megan Fox) by a demon is the film's starting point for metaphor and satire, not the ending of it ... except to Cody and director Karyn Kusama, who has yet to show us she can make another film like her startling debut, *Girlfight*. Perhaps if no one noticed a difference between Jennifer pre-demon and Jennifer possessed, that might have helped make the point we're supposed to believe the movie wants to make. But pre-possession Jennifer is actually a pretty nice, hot, popular cheerleader.

So where's the satire when an ordinary girl becomes possessed by a demon and then goes on a rampage killing people who never did her any harm? Demon Jennifer bullying assorted boys in the most violent ways possible is meant to be amusing, or pointed, or something?

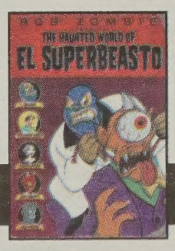
Cody has been saying all sorts of things to anyone who will listen about how *Jennifer's Body* is supposed to be some sort of allegory about adolescent girls, from their bitchiness to their best friends to their disordered eating. But all that's here are a few placeholders, points at which some allegory could have been inserted in the story.

If *Juno* had real heart and real people doing their best to cope with difficult circumstances while trying to keep a sense of humor, *Jennifer's Body* has a fervent desire that you really like nods to '80s slasher flicks. Oh, and that you really enjoy seeing Megan Fox make out with Amanda Seyfried even if it makes such little sense within the context of the story that the actors themselves appear totally nonplussed by the moment.

Random might be the word that best characterizes *Jennifer's Body*, from the shocking act of destruction and horror that opens the film onward. If Satan were as real and as powerful as it is implied here, he'd have had a hand in that initial act, and we'd have enjoyed some implications that there truly is some awesome power of evil at work. But the only awesome power Cody seems to be aware of here is that of the non sequitur. It's all over *Jennifer's Body*, and it ain't the doing of Satan.

— scene@csindy.com

CineFiles



The Haunted World of El Superbeasto (R)

Anchor Bay Home Entertainment / Release: Sept. 22

Regardless of what you think about his music, no genre fan can deny Rob Zombie has a wonderfully warped B-movie-drenched sense of design that makes everything he touches total works of art. In his first animated feature (based on his comic book), the kinetic 'n sleazy influence of animation legend Ralph Bakshi is all over the place. Masked Mexican wrestler El Superbeasto (Tom Papa) teams with sister Suzi X (Sheri Moon Zombie) to take on the diabolical Dr. Satan, who, when he marries his ghetto-stripper bride, will become an unstoppable monster. There's an army of werewolf-infected Nazi SS soldiers to cleanse the palate. Blood, boobs and bad taste are all over this, as well as top-notch talent: Paul Giamatti, Rosario Dawson, Ken Foree and Brian Posehn deliver hilarious voice-performances. This is an adult Adult Swim! *— **Louis Fowler***

Easy Virtue (PG-13)

Sony Pictures

If Noel Coward had written a 1920s *Meet the Parents*, it might resemble this intoxicating blend of retro and up-to-the-moment. American Larita (a luminous Jessica Biel) arrives at the home of her new husband, British aristocrat John Whittaker (major-star-in-the-making Ben Barnes). The mother-in-law of withering tongue (Kristin Scott Thomas, in the performance of her career) and distant WWI vet father-in-law (Colin Firth, at perhaps his most intriguing) will test her marriage. It's wickedly funny and unexpectedly bittersweet, what with the privations of the Great Depression and World War II on the horizon, but never relentlessly grim. Its paradoxically cheery, melancholy ending is well-earned, and exactly right. DVD bonuses include commentary by director/writer Stephan Elliott and co-writer Sheridan Jobbins, plus deleted scenes, blooper reel and more. *— **MaryAnn Johanson***

Bonanza: The Official First Season, Vols. 1 and 2 (NR)

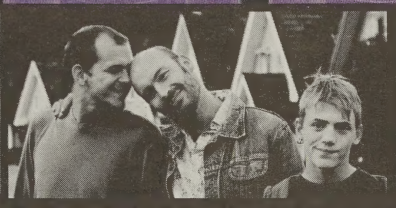
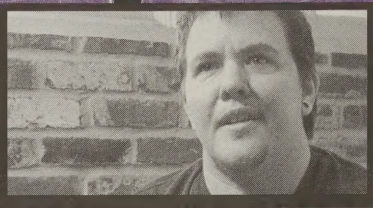
Paramount Home Entertainment

During my childhood in Texas, on Saturdays the local indie TV affiliate would air nothing but '60s Westerns: *The Big Valley*, *High Chaparral* and, of course, *Bonanza*. My dad thought they were great; I thought they were incentive to go out and play. But grown-up and beginning to inherit my father's tastes, I now find *Bonanza* a well-paced, action-packed outing that is highly nuanced and extremely entertaining. Simply, the Cartwrights (Lorne Greene, Michael Landon, Pernell Roberts) spend every week defending their land, the Ponderosa, from claim-jumpers, cattle thieves and an assortment of low-rent guest stars. Younger viewers will hate this — no quick cuts or hip-hop soundtrack — but those willing to sit still for more than an hour will find a form of TV storytelling in need of resurrection. *— **Louis Fowler***

Lavender potpourri

Holidays, health issues and high-drama home lives mix up the Springs' 10th annual LGBT film festival

By Jill Thomas

When she thinks back over the 10 years that she's directed the Pikes Peak Lavender Film Festival, Alma Cremonesi hesitates to name her favorite films. She's already learned that what she likes really isn't that important.

"At first [in selecting films] I was going with my own taste, which I discovered was a little too esoteric …" she says. "I learned pretty quickly that I had to understand the taste of our audience."

So the festival strives each year to be diverse. A team of four travels to the San Francisco International Lesbian & Gay Film Fest to pick the best from that 11-day festival to screen here.

"It's hard," Cremonesi says, "because you want to include transgendered people, you want to include offbeat subjects, you want to have foreign films and domestic films, you want to have films for men and women, you want to have narrative films, dramatic films, comedies and documentaries."

With 13 feature-length films, including four documentaries, plus seven shorts, this year's fest is the biggest in recent years, and Cremonesi hopes it's the right mix. Here's a look at some of the more notable selections:

I Can't Think Straight

Friday, Sept. 18, 7:30 p.m.

Opening night's first feature, *I Can't Think Straight*, follows two women — one Jordanian Christian, one Indian Muslim — raised by repressive families. Despite both having boyfriends, with one about to celebrate her engagement with an extravagant party thrown by her parents, the women find themselves irresistibly drawn to one another.

This could have been an interesting look of cross-cultural love, but the film is mostly forgettable aside from its highly attractive leading ladies (Lisa Ray and Sheetal Sheth from last year's *The World Unseen*), who do make a pleasant pairing.

Patrik, Age 1.5

Friday, 9:05 p.m.

Even if the night's first film leaves you uninspired, don't cut out early or you'll miss one of the festival's best features. In *Patrik, Age 1.5*, a sensitive, funny drama from Sweden, Göran and Sven move to suburbia and hope to adopt a toddler. When a tiny typo brings them a youth who's 15, instead of 1.5, the action takes off.

Sven struggles to tolerate a teen with a violent past, Göran is caught off-guard by Sven's rebellion, and Patrik is uneasy about living with "homos" until the matter can be resolved. One of the film's delights is its beautifully photographed, colorful and slightly cartoonish setting in a too-perfect suburbia, where the straight neighbors are played almost as caricatures.

Double feature: *Against a Trans Narrative* and *Diagnosing Difference*

Saturday, Sept. 19, 10 a.m.

Both those inside and outside the transgendered community should find ideas to digest in this pair of documentaries. The first, *Against a Trans Narrative*, smashes the expectation that transgendered people should fit their lives into clichéd storylines to explain their feelings and to please the experts who serve them. Instead, the film mixes interviews, group discussions, dramatic scenes and readings to bring out a diversity of opinions and experiences. It addresses complex issues like relationships during transition, and sexism and changes in power and privilege.

Diagnosing Difference disputes the idea that gender identity disorder should be classified as a mental health condition. Lively, diverse and articulate transgendered people, including an early activist, a punk rocker, a psychologist and others, talk candidly about their lives, the changes they've seen, and the future they envision.

Make the Yuletide Gay

Saturday, 2:30 p.m.

While it might seem early for a holiday feature, *Make the Yuletide Gay* unwraps some Christmas cheer. Nathan and Gunn are out as a couple at college, but at home Gunn's parents are unaware that he's gay. When Nathan's parents decide to take a holiday cruise, Nathan shows up on Gunn's doorstep for Christmas, where Gunn wants to pass for "roommates." Nathan's not so sure.

The humor is a little too simple, but what saves this "teen" film is the cast of infectiously enjoyable characters. Gunn's mother stands out as an overly enthusiastic, cookie-baking machine who bathes herself in Christmas kitsch and Gunn's father is a genial, albeit overgrown, pothead.

Drool

Saturday, 5:30 p.m.

Be warned: This is a very dark comedy that touches on domestic violence and explicit racism in a dysfunctional Southern family. Doesn't sound like a comedy? I didn't think so, either, but *Drool* is one of the fest's best and most entertaining films.

Anora is a downtrodden housewife who tolerates a horrible husband, a potty-mouthed teen and a bratty son via regular and hilarious fantasies of a better life. When the cosmetics saleswoman next door gives Anora a makeover, and Anora's husband catches them kissing, violence sparks a *Thelma & Louise*-type run with kids in tow. You'll like these characters so much, you'll forgive them their backward beginnings and embrace their liberation.

Edie & Thea: A Very Long Engagement

Sunday, Sept. 20, 2:30 p.m.

This timely film, which won the Outstanding Documentary Feature Award at Outfest 2009, tells the moving story of a lifelong love affair. *Edie & Thea* follows the two title characters from their meeting in the early '60s to the present day, using personal photos and their candid stories to re-create the romance and its struggle to endure personal and political pressures.

When Edie gets a difficult diagnosis, the urgency to make their 42-year relationship "official" grows, and they travel to Canada in hopes of being wed. Current headlines about same-sex marriage only make this film's touching moments feel more powerful, without turning maudlin.

— *jill@csindy.com*

CAPSULE

Pikes Peak Lavender Film Festival

Sept. 18-20

CC's Armstrong Hall, 14 E. Cache la Poudre St., and Cornerstone Arts Center, 825 N. Cascade Ave.

Tickets: $10-$75; visit ppliff.org for full schedule and more.